

# BIOSECURITY

## BIOSECURITY refers to procedures that:

Prevent livestock and crop diseases from getting onto a farm, spreading within the farm, and travelling to another location. Keeping livestock and crops healthy helps ensure your food is safe.

## Biosecurity for farm animals

Disease in livestock can be spread:

- by pets, insects, wild birds and wildlife;
- by clothing, hair and shoes of visitors and employees;
- in contaminated feed, water, bedding and soil;
- by contaminated vehicles and farm equipment;
- by diseased animals or carcasses of dead animals; and
- in airborne particles and dust.<sup>1</sup>



Biosecurity helps keep animals healthy and protects them from unnecessary pain and suffering. It also reduces the need for farmers to use treatments such as antibiotics.

## IF YOU VISIT A FARM...

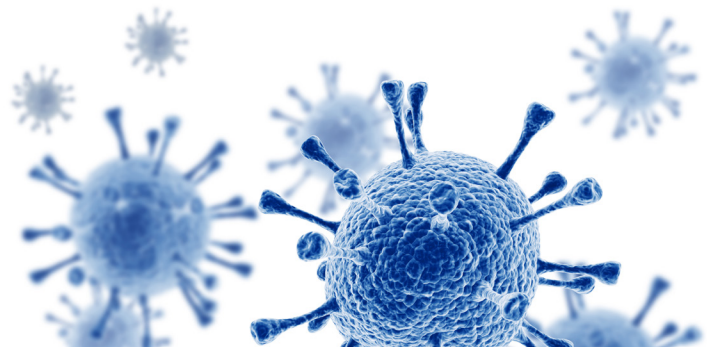


On some livestock farms, you may not be allowed to enter barns because you could bring diseases into them. On high biosecurity farms, employees may have to shower and change their clothing before they enter and after they leave their work place. If visitors are allowed, then they too are required to shower in and shower out.

The level of biosecurity depends on the species of livestock raised, the type of diseases those animals are susceptible to, and the risk level that those diseases pose to the animals' health. Poultry and pig farms often have high levels of biosecurity.



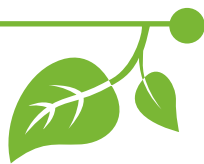
Cage-free "aviary" housing for egg laying hens





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## LESSONS FROM 1952



**Foot-and-Mouth Disease** is a contagious and sometimes fatal virus that causes sores to develop on feet and in mouths of some animals. Canada's last outbreak was in Saskatchewan in 1951-52. It was thought to have been caused by a farm worker from West Germany who allegedly transmitted the virus via either his clothing or dried sausage that he had brought from Germany and had fed to pigs.

In total, 29 farms were infected. The animals and products destroyed included 1,313 cattle, 294 swine, 97 sheep, one goat, 2,372 fowl and 15,828 eggs. Because of the resulting ban on exports, the value of livestock fell by \$651 million. The total loss was \$722 million plus one year's loss of trade in livestock and livestock products. And that was in 1952 dollars!<sup>12</sup>

## Biosecurity plans

Plans usually involve testing incoming animals, separating out newly purchased animals in case of disease and using a monitoring system that detects infections. Plans also address if, how and where visitors (including veterinarians, inspectors and suppliers) are allowed access.

Farmers and ranchers put together biosecurity plans for their farms with the assistance of their herd/flock veterinarian. Farmer organizations, researchers and provincial/territorial governments work with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) to develop biosecurity standards and guidelines.<sup>3,4</sup>



## BIOSECURITY FOR CROPS

Plant diseases and pests such as weeds and destructive insects can damage and kill crops, affecting farmers' income, availability of food and a country's ability to export food products to other countries. Many grain, vegetable and fruit farmers also have biosecurity plans to prevent contaminated seeds, plants and harmful insects from being introduced onto their farms – which is good for the environment, too!



## A WORLD WITHOUT BANANAS

Bananas have almost become extinct more than once. Since the early 1900s, banana farmers worldwide have battled a fungus called **fusarium wilt** or **Panama Disease**, along with other diseases. Fortunately, biosecurity measures have made it possible for all of us to continue to enjoy bananas!<sup>15</sup>



Barn for egg laying hens